

Apache County – Crooked Nail Trail Planning Meeting
September 7, 2016 Town of Eagar Town Hall 1 pm to 3 pm

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Debra Seeley, Ron Shepherd, Nancy Huser, Paula Pflepsen, Jeff Wells, Pam Jaramillo, Paul Ramsey, Carl Sedit, Tami Ryan, Nancy Golightly, Adam Milnor

- Review Arizona State Parks RTP/OHV grant process
 - The project was awarded a \$296k grant for trail planning and construction
 - Determining an alignment is the next step to allow for cultural resource clearance and project agreement (which makes funds available)
 - AZ State Parks grant coordinator Sean Hammond also confirmed the grant only uses state funds, not federal, which affects NEPA compliance and permitting
 - Paula Pflepsen, Archeologist for AZ State Parks and manager of the Site Stewards program, attended the meeting to learn more about the project
- Crooked Nail Trail Alignment
 - Report out on alignment follow up items from August meeting
 - Grovers Hill Irrigation Company
 - Paul spoke with contacts from the Irrigation Company
 - They were not opposed, but some concern about liability (need to refer to Arizona Recreational Use Statute)
 - Could be some maintenance benefit for the company
 - Would need to still have conversation with their legal representation:
 - Is there an access route?
 - There a few access points, including one off of main highway, one off old St Johns Highway
 - Canal would allow for connection between Old St Johns Highway Route and St Johns proper
 - Tucson Electric Power
 - Paul met with two individuals at TEP, and they had concerns about recreational use inside exterior fence due to national security directives
 - Likely a challenge to use TEP property, would need to look at options to avoid
 - Current Plant Manager is Pat Fahey
 - Arizona Game and Fish Department (Nancy reached out to Dave Dorm)
 - Becker Lake or other AZGFD property as a staging area?
 - Positive feedback but with use of state property, there would need to be some type of maintenance agreement
 - Could also discuss future access to Sipe property for connections to the south
 - Brandon Jerstad is the archeologist for AZGFD, Paula will make him aware of the project
 - Hooper Ranch
 - No contact made yet, but will continue to try along with other private landowners (Debra to follow up)
 - Highway 60 staging area

- Facility is owned by Springerville, with some adjacent AZGFD property
- Springerville would be willing to discuss its use as a staging area for the trail
- Lyman Lake State Park
 - Need to approach Lyman Lake about entrance fee, joint access to permit holders
 - Add to question about Ambassador program (Tami will follow up)
- TRAIL ALIGNMENT REVIEW
 - See appendix for a list the things to seek out and to avoid when selecting an alignment, as brainstormed by the group
 - There was group discussion on each of the alignments, the pros and cons of each route are listed below (“**Crooked Nail Trail Alignment Options**”):
 - The need for a relatively simple, direct and easy to implement Phase 1 of the Crooked Nail Trail was emphasized
 - Old St Johns Highway and Eastern Route are the most promising and straightforward
 - Agreement to pursue feasibility and specifics on these routes first
 - Central Route is temporarily set aside due to concerns with using TEP property
 - River Route is temporarily set aside due to density of cultural resource sites which would require lengthy survey
- Public outreach, engagement of elected officials
 - Need to think about way to clearly communicate allowable uses on the trail, trail width, etc.
 - Adam will prepare a quick public summary of what is known right now about the trail
 - 15’ is the width of the easement , not the trail
 - The notes continue to be posted online by Eagar
 - There will be a booth at the County Fair
 - Tribal engagement and involvement
 - Best practice during the trail planning process it to engage (Paula recommendation)
 - Next meeting need to discuss how to roll out information to each municipality, general public
- The Intergovernmental Agreement is still under review.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

- Jeff Wells, local business owner of Cowboy Up and dirt bike rider, attended for the first time
 - There is a lack of narrow singletrack motorized opportunities that this effort should consider
 - Question on what type of uses and width of existing trail → under the impression the trail was motorized singletrack
 - In the future, could get representation from local motorized users to describe uses and needs
 - Arizona Motorcycle Riders Association could be a future resource – singletrack riders, 8 clubs around state, would be willing to assist future connections
- Other questions/considerations:
 - Can we make it easier for street legal registration?
 - It may be legislatively directed that it must occur at MVD office
 - Cattle guards are preferable to gates to limit impact to ranchers
 - Installation as part of the grant could be emphasized when approaching ranchers, private landowners
 - Would still need gates for horseback riders

- Future resources for implementation?
 - Boy Scout volunteer opportunities
 - IMBA technical assistance – trail
 - OHV Ambassadors (ASP program)
 - FFA – Future Farmers of America
 - Arizona State Parks Site Steward Program

Next Steps

- Update map to reflect discussion about starting point; send out revised map with (Adam)
- Contact with State Trust Lands Archeologist on East and West Routes, Matt Barrend (Paula)
- Becker Lake follow up – more specific discussions on staging possibilities (Nancy)
- Ron/Carl to scout eastern route, think staging options and present at next meeting
- Follow up with Grovers Hill Irrigation (Paul)
- Contact Arizona State Parks re: Ambassador program, Lyman Lake (Tami)
- Summarize current “knowns” about the trail – width, uses, funding, start/end points (Adam)
- Compile meeting participant list up to now (Jeremiah)

Phase 1: Trail Alignment Considerations

Brainstormed at the 9/7/16 planning meeting

+ /Seek Out	- / Minimize or Avoid
Lower degree of difficulty – builds momentum and allows for a chance to work together	Private property owners
Scenic and varied terrain	New crossing of the Little Colorado River – need for 404 permit
Good staging areas - ideally close to Springerville/Eager but not necessary at first	Lots of new trail construction and disturbance
Allows for equestrian access	Sensitive cultural resources and sites not suitable for public viewing
Opportunities for spur trails or loops	Tucson Electric Power secure area
Can be used in segments with multiple access points	Sensitive wildlife habitats or other natural features
Highly visible for residents and tourists, requires minimal wayfinding	Minimize impact to ranching and business operations
Uses existing roads, public easements or facilities	Locations that don't allow for good sightlines, leading to user conflict
Educational and interpretive opportunities	

Crooked Nail Trail Alignment Options

updated 9/8/2016

NOTE: All routes identified below are preliminary and conceptual in nature. Any final route will require the permission of private property owners and the State Land Department through easement or right-of-way.

The following route options were discussed at the September 7 planning meeting. Based on this discussion, the Old St Johns Highway and the Eastern Route are going to be more closely evaluated.

#1) Eastern Route

Starts east of Springerville on Highway 60, and heads north on State Trust Lands, staying east of the TEP generating station. Uses County Road 6040 to enter St. Johns. The existing easement for the old highway could provide a good staging area

Pros	Cons
Sticks to State Trust land	Longest route (43 miles)
Scenic and interesting route	Does not provide access to Lyman Lake or other sites
Avoids most of private property	Most remote, which means not as many options for using segments of the trail for short trips
No river crossing required	Does not begin near Springerville/Eagar

#2) Old St. Johns Highway

Begins near Springerville, possibly at Becker Lake wildlife area, uses an underpass of Highway 60, then travels on the west side of 191, using an existing county-maintained road called the Old St. Johns Highway.

Unknown connection to St Johns – but would have the chance to connect to Lyman Lake and potentially use irrigation company canals.

An underpass of the Hwy 191 east of the prison complex could be an option.

Pros	Cons
Good public access using county maintained road	Less interesting terrain, scenery and historical sites for a portion of the route
Possible access to Lyman Lake Could connect to Grover Hill Irrigation Company	Not a clear connection on the northern end without use of irrigation canals
Possible connection to Becker Lake	Fee at Lyman Lake
Underpass under Highway 60 could be used	Would need to find suitable Highway 191 crossing
Most simple route for much of the	
State Trust Land exists where some connections are needed	

#3) River Route

Begins on the east side of Highway 60, possibly using the using rest area as a staging area. Aligns closely with the route of the Little Colorado River from Springerville before crossing the river using county road 4162, then using existing roads to ascend the mesa and head north. Uses County Road 6040 to enter St. Johns.

Pros	Cons
Interesting terrain and scenery	Rich in cultural resource sites would increase complexity and cost for survey
Hits points of interest, view of Lyman Lake and beyond	Some new trail construction required in rough terrain
Direct (34 miles)	Private property present
Allows for connections, spurs and use of the trail as shorter segments	

#4) Central Route:

Begins at Old Highway 60 on the south and uses a mixture of existing routes and new trail segments – crosses TEP property west of the generating station (near the solar panel array) before heading north. Uses County Road 6040 to enter St. Johns.

Pros	Cons
Relatively direct (34 miles)	Requires crossing several private property owners in middle section including TEP, which may not be feasible
Existing roads available for much of the route	Does not start in Springerville/Eager
No Little Colorado River crossing required	
Relatively scenic	